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Editor :	F. W. HIBBERT
Assist. Editor :	CHRISTINE WATKINS
Business Manager :	J. HAWKINS
Cover Design :	E. J. DUNMORE

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EDITORIAL

SINCE the war there has been a considerable shift in emphasis from Arts to Sciences.

Much has been said and written on this theme but there can be no harm in attempting to assess the present situation and perhaps make a few suggestions for the future.

One only has to be at this University for a few weeks to realise that the proportion of science and engineering students is extremely large and from conversations with students from other colleges it seems that this situation is fairly general. This is, perhaps, as it should be. In order to maintain and improve on the high standard of living achieved in this and other countries in recent years we need to keep up a high level of industrial efficiency. This means more and better technologists.

There is, however, another more personal side to this question. A young boy of fifteen or even less upon deciding to take up a scientific career is required thereafter to specialise in scientific subjects. It is true that up to the time that he takes Ordinary Level G.C.E. at sixteen this specialisation is not too intense, but after this there is no turning back. The boy has decided at a ridiculously early age to be a scientist and thus he shall be trained as a scientist. Indeed, at the time of decision he is probably open to undue influence by his parents and schoolteachers.

While recognising that the world of technology is so complicated that a student has to specialise in order to learn enough in a reasonable time we would suggest that a much broader education common to all pupils should be given up to the age of sixteen when the necessary decision to specialise should be made. Nobody would deny that a child (for want of a better word) matures a great deal between the ages of fourteen and sixteen. Furthermore, after a scientific career has been embarked upon is there any reason why a Modern Language or English, or any such subject cannot be included in the syllabus? Perhaps the science student could take Advanced Level G.C.E. in this subject (which could be his own choice) in his first or second year at University.

In this way the Universities could produce more balanced members of society and perhaps better technologists, instead of narrow-minded scientific robots as we are in danger of achieving now.

This is an unpretentious magazine. It is as good as its contributions, and these reflect the thoughts and standards of writing of this small section of the country's intelligensia. If you think that the standard is not high enough then it is up to you to try to raise it. THE EDITOR.

ADVENTURES IN SOUTHERN HISTORY

THIRTY-FIVE years ago my paternal grandfather gave his grandson some wholesome advice as the twenty-five year old college student left his home in Indiana for a university position across Mason and Dixon's Line. Grandfather Stephenson often bragged in his illiterate way that he "fit to save the Union"; but now, in the mellowness of years that had whitened his hair and softened his recollections, he warned: "Don't you cast any reflections on Confederate soldiers. They were brave men, and we had a hard time stopping them. What a pity we had to have a war. They would have made good neighbors."

If the neophyte needed admonition to supplement objectivity and understanding as goals in history learned from graduate school mentors, this counsel provided it. He would endeavour, whether at the University of Kentucky, Louisiana State, or Tulane, to understand Southerners, descendants of Confederates who fought for an independent South. He did not realize at the time that the history of his adopted region would become an absorbing interest, a great obsession that would occupy most of his attention thenceforward. He was unaware, too, that many of his experiences would provide high adventure.

The morning mail—sometime in 1932—brought a letter with content apparent from the return address, *The Dictionary of American Biography*. The writer had already contributed several sketches, chiefly of Kansas and Louisiana men, to this prospective twenty-volume work modeled on the *British Dictionary of National Biography*. Previous assignments had been relatively unimportant, ranging in length from 600 to 1,500 words. This one was different. Would he now write a 4,000-word biography of General Zachary Taylor, twelfth president of the United States? This was a major assignment for a young historian in his early thirties, and he accepted it with alacrity, or however it is one accepts an exciting invitation. He was certainly not an authority on the time-serving military frontiersman who belatedly won his spurs at the Battle of Buena Vista in the Mexican War, a victory that catapulted Taylor into the presidency the following year. The only possible explanation for the request was the coincidence that the historian lived in Baton Rouge, the seat of Louisiana State University, and that Taylor lived in the same town when he attained the presidency. Reason enough!

So, in the summer of 1933, the biographer set out for Washington to investigate Taylor in the Library of Congress, and to visit the president's birthplace in nearby Orange, Virginia. There, in the county courthouse, he discovered the "family tree," badly in need of pruning; and there also he met Jacqueline P. Taylor, descendant of a brother. He helped a bit with Taylor papers and even more by inquiring if the researcher were acquainted with the president's grand-daughter, Mrs. Betty Taylor Stauffer, who lived in New Orleans, and who, he asserted, possessed some Taylor family manuscripts.

Back in Louisiana, the investigator arranged a meeting with the octogenarian Mrs. Stauffer. Did she have some family papers she would permit him to examine, he asked after the lapse of considerable time devoted to social amenities customary in such requests. She had some,

and she would be delighted to open them for the historian's use. But by this time the researcher's impaired faculties rendered him incompetent to examine the records. For Mrs. Stauffer, with Virginia ancestry, Kentucky upbringing, and Louisiana residence, demonstrated true Southern hospitality soon after his arrival by proposing mint juleps. Despite abstemious habits he said yes, for the researcher must make himself agreeable. She sipped her julep enthusiastically, pausing periodically to assure unrestrained enjoyment of its flavour and aroma, and to comment on the mint julep as a Southern social institution. Her visitor struggled through the act, for a julep is a very potent drink for one not to the manner born. Mrs. Stauffer's thirst was still unquenched, and the way she put the question for a second round dictated a positive reply. Before they finished a third, a spread rug on the floor was revolving anticlockwise the novice thought, though he could not be absolutely sure of this, for sometimes it seemed to reverse its axis and turn gently in the opposite direction. While he was contemplating this extraordinary phenomenon, Mrs. Stauffer asked the butler to bring the papers and to set up a card table on which to use them. Despite three university degrees, and a degree of literacy, the researcher experienced considerable difficulty in reading what lay before him, and the notes he took seemed quite illegible. It finally occurred to him that he might extricate himself from this dilemma by pretending an errand in downtown New Orleans and a return to Baton Rouge the same day. Could he come back a week later to continue his "research"? Yes, of course. She would be leaving in the interim to visit friends in Kentucky, but the butler would arrange the papers for his use and supply him with more juleps to settle the dust on musty manuscripts. The episode illustrates the problems a historian faces in sober historical research.

Assembling the records from which the history of the South could be written had been in progress for a generation before young Stephenson arrived on Southern soil. He soon discovered, however, that the task was far from complete. There were plantation diaries, account books, and correspondence still gathering dust in the attics of mansion houses. Public records in city halls, customhouses, and a thousand courthouses from Maryland to Texas contained unexploited raw materials of history that yielded evidence about the poor as well as the rich. Church archives and newspaper offices offered manuscript records and press files important to a complete and balanced history of the region. Unless one has had the experience of sleuthing in an attic for historical materials, he cannot imagine the thrill of a new discovery that would extend the frontiers of historical knowledge. While not a major contribution, the writer brought to the archives of his university several significant collections of plantation records. One of his books was based primarily upon records in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee courthouses.

The "great adventure" began over a quarter century ago. The day of the pioneers had passed; and the great wealth of Southern materials was attracting scores of young scholars. A historical society devoted to the promotion of research and writing was an unrealized dream of the pioneers. It became a reality in 1934. An organized society with

a medium of publication would foster a sense of unity and inspire the younger generation to gather more records, to write articles and books, and to introduce more courses in Southern history into college curriculums. An organization meeting was called for November 2nd at Atlanta, Georgia; and the writer was one of twenty invited to form a society of Southern historians.

Before departing for the Atlanta meeting, he pondered the problem of a scholarly periodical. No association of historians could hope to prosper unless it had a medium of publication. He therefore determined to sound out the administration of his university on its willingness to sponsor a quarterly magazine devoted to Southern history. A proposal to subsidize the organization was laid before the president. He liked the idea, and inquired how much money it would take to publish the magazine. Fortunately, the interviewer hesitated a moment; and in the split second while he was contemplating whether to ask for the conservative figure of a thousand dollars or the unrealistic sum of fifteen hundred, the president said: "Well, speak up! Would five thousand dollars a year be enough?" The inquirer managed to stammer that with the exercise of rigid economy a reputable quarterly journal could be published for that amount. This generous subsidy to supplement income from membership fees enabled the Southern Historical Association to accumulate a balance of nine thousand dollars before the *Journal of Southern History* was transferred to another university eight years later. Participation in forming the Association and in editing the *Journal* were the most enduring contributions the writer made to the historical guild. Within a short time the Association had fifteen hundred members scattered through most of the forty-eight states and several foreign countries; and the magazine had acquired an enviable reputation in scholarship and in literary craftsmanship. The Association celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary last November.

With the Association and its *Journal* well established, and with college courses in Southern history totalling nearly a hundred, the writer turned to another project: a scholarly, multivolume history of the South. The proposal, inaugurated in 1938, contemplated a comprehensive co-operative history carefully organized into ten unified and recognizable periods from the founding of Jamestown to the present. Success would depend largely upon the choice of contributors. If ten reputable scholars, each one a recognized authority in the period of his assignment, could be enlisted, "A History of the South" might attain distinguished recognition. When a half dozen prospective authors had been settled upon, announcement of the project was sent to them, along with an invitation to contribute to it.

And then an unforeseen problem arose. The invitation to write the volume of the Southern Confederacy was sent to Charles W. Ramsdell, University of Texas, whose knowledge of those four critical years surpassed that of any other historian. His university had acquired some years earlier "The Littlefield Fund for Southern History," designed to purchase Southern historical records and eventually to publish a history of the South. Delegated by the Littlefield Committee to draft a plan for

a six-volume co-operative history, Professor Ramsdell was on the point of announcing his project when the invitation reached him. He was fully as surprised as his correspondent that another proposal existed. The South needed one comprehensive history; competitive projects were unthinkable. Negotiations led to collaboration: Ramsdell and the writer would serve as joint editors; the universities they represented would co-operate in subsidizing publication; the ten-volume proposal rather than the six was adopted. Seven volumes in the series have been published; an eighth manuscript has been completed; the other two should materialize in a year or so.

The successful launching of this venture suggested another: The Southern Biography Series. Many of the South's ablest statesmen had received biographical treatment; but some of them, as well as several second-rate men, awaited competent biographers. The new series was begun in 1940, and before the joint editor relinquished his position in 1946, nine volumes had appeared. The series has continued under other editorship in recent years.

In the same decade that saw the foregoing projects initiated, the writer concluded that the cause of Southern history might be promoted by establishing a series of lectures to be delivered annually by outstanding authorities. They were named in honour of a well-known historian, Walter L. Fleming, an authority on the Reconstruction period who taught at Louisiana State University many years before the writer began his seventeen years of service there. The Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History were inaugurated in 1938, with Ramsdell as the first lecturer; and they have continued uninterruptedly from that time to the present. Most of the lectures have been considered worthy of publication by the Louisiana State University Press. Some of the volumes are masterpieces of ripe scholarship and sound interpretation.

A final adventure in Southern history occurred on this side of the Atlantic. The narrator was invited a decade ago to lecture at the University of Birmingham as Fulbright Professor of History. One of his assignments was an extramural course in Southern history at Ludlow, in Southern Shropshire. He met the class of thirty-five students one evening a week for an hour's lecture, followed by a coffee break, and then by discussion that lasted in theory for thirty minutes but often continued for a whole hour. After discussions finally closed, six or eight of the choice spirits accompanied the lecturer to one of the member's homes, or to the Feathers Hotel Lounge, for refreshments. On the first adjournment to the Feathers, the lecturer ordered a whisky sour, but the waiter shook his head; he had never heard of the drink. A week later, perhaps by prearrangement, all were served whisky sours. A year after the lecturer returned to America, a letter from a member of the class said the group of "choice spirits" had visited the Feathers lounge for a round of whisky sours in his honor, a tribute to his permanent influence in England!

WENDELL HOLMES STEPHENSON.

THE ANSWER LIES WITH US

WHEN I decided to write this article last term the South African controversy was very topical but I knew, should it be published, that it would be read at a time when, for most of us, the very real issues of examinations would be uppermost in our minds. This, I hoped, would have denuded the subject of its emotional content and the flush of student idealism would be on the wane.

I think all of us have, at one time or another, considered the African question and there is a great deal of unanimity in the condemnation of "Apartheid" in principle. Students, the world over, have a tendency to become idealists. No doubt the freedom from responsibility and the imperfect insulation from the realities of life are conducive to idealism. This is not, of course, a situation to be decried. There is, however, a very large gap between practice and theory, between the working code and the moral ideal. The distance varies, admittedly, from country to country.

Having lived in various parts of the African continent for a number of years (though not in South Africa) I have considered the African problem for quite some time. It would be exceptionally easy to be "swept with the crowd" while up at University but I am not fully convinced that three aspects of this problem, have been accorded the deliberation they deserve. Foremost of these is the very real difference between the Union of South Africa and the rest of Africa. Secondly, there is our own future with Africa, and lastly the inconsistencies in the attitude towards coloured people in this country aggravated by our general parochial and insular "atmosphere."

It never has been this country's intention to establish a White State in our part of the African continent. Consequently there has been no heart searching in order to pursue a policy of Black autonomy. It has been difficult, however, for our "Colonel Blimp" types to wean themselves from the idea of white supremacy. Even now the "land tenure" clause in the future Kenya constitution, just sketched, introduces an element far removed from the co-existence ideal loudly proclaimed. The gradual process of Black autonomy will encounter many difficulties, not least of which will be the safeguarding of White interests and the relationship between White settlers and a Black government. We have no cause to be smugly complacent about the development of Black autonomy in our part of Africa. The Mau Mau campaign was a grim reminder that the Africans are not satisfied with the pace of the change. Without doubt, it is this country that is dictating the pace; and the struggle to achieve Black autonomy without severely damaging OUR ECONOMY is setting central Africa alight. It is where there is a large controlling white faction that hostility is greatest; in both Kenya and Rhodesia white settlers govern the territories and these "people" are not fully convinced that Black autonomy is the ultimate answer. It is in this respect that both these areas bear some resemblance to the Union of South Africa. However, to a great extent the policy that will be followed will be that dictated by the United Kingdom (hence the Monkton Commission); and it will be to the United Kingdom that the White

population of these two areas will look for safeguards and if need be for help in the event of evacuation. It is unlikely that evacuation would be necessary in view of the technical and economic dependency of these territories. I do not think there is any need for immediate concern because for quite a few years hence, we, to a great extent, will be pulling the economic strings with or without Black autonomy.

The Union of South Africa is the only fully autonomous White State on the whole of the African continent, and as such, Black autonomy is not an aim but a threat. Universal suffrage and full integration with the white population would mean in a very short space of time a Black government (even if in the meantime a "mixed" one prevailed). No one can deny that "Apartheid" especially with the use of Black labour is an unpleasant situation. But what is the answer? Is one to conclude from the support given to the Boycott that the existence of a White State on the African continent is to be deplored? Is the Boycott supposed to bring about the fall of the White State in the Union of South Africa? It is very noticeable that not one of our eminent spokesmen here at the University has put forward an alternative suggestion to "Apartheid" as a means of preserving White autonomy in the Union. If it is our Boycotters' aim to bring about Black autonomy (accepting the short term compromise of a mixed government) why don't they say this? There is no parallel situation like this anywhere in the world where an autonomous White State is threatened by a take-over from its black population. Stampeding up and down for the Boycott campaign will not produce the answer, though undeniably it has produced a little thought but not all sympathetic. The recent Housewives' statements and the House of Commons Kitchen Committee's statement bears this out. I do not think that the "Apartheid" situation will be tolerated as a permanent feature in the Union either by Black or White. A good old "English" compromise will have to be worked out between the clashing interests. It may well be that "Apartheid" is the first move towards such a compromise. At least the black population is not being placed "in reservations" in the same way that the American Indian was. I suppose that was acceptable in view of the numerical white superiority? Self-preservation is a strong force and in times of danger desperate measures are often employed; no doubt the operation of "Apartheid" is coloured by such measures. It is hoped that when the danger abates a much more tolerant situation will prevail. The handling of our own little "Unions" in Kenya and Rhodesia will influence the direction of this potentially dangerous situation.

This brings us to this country's relationship with Africa in the future. One of the immediate dangers to be recognised is the over-exaggeration of our own economic claims. To "hang-on" and write into the various constitutions undue white safeguards is incompatible with the spirit by which Black autonomy should be realised. To attempt to do this, and the developments in Africa seem to point this way, will surely only incur an undercurrent of hostility once Black autonomy is achieved. To try and impose a Western "culture" in its entirety is only selfish folly. Our opposers could say that the voluntary membership of the Commonwealth argues against any such imposition. But this "choice" is ex-

ceedingly fatuous if economic and technical "ties" render any alternative impossible. Central Africa is going to "demand," in the very near future, enormous sums of money and equipment—the insatiable demands of most of the under-developed countries are for just such items. This country is in the throes of a large industrial and social re-organisation: cheap Atomic power to be produced, Railways to be modernised as with Factories, Road system (what a system) to be re-organised, and to "top" it all an *increasing* Defence Bill. From this it would seem that there will be very little left in the "coffers" to meet the demands of Africa. It may be that Canada and Australia will be able to help "foot the bill" but their own "under-development" does not permit much optimism. There is likely to be quite a time lag before they will be in such an affluent position and when they are *we* may well wish to be the recipients! America seems to be tiring from the heavy post-war commitments and will no doubt have a similar domestic programme in the future. If we are to pursue our own reorganisation, and in the interests of this country it should be rigorously pursued, our inability to meet fully the Africans demands must be squarely faced. We can follow a policy of "gradualism" based, in no small measure, on exaggerated considerations of our own White settlers and implantation of favourable "Western politics and culture." The danger of this policy is the attainment of the complete reversal of what we are trying to achieve. On the other hand we can, although it may mean some economic sacrifices, put the Black population first and hasten their autonomy instead of retarding it, at the same time encouraging a much purer democracy based on complete Socialism. This should not be feared; for the inheritors of such a social organisation are unlikely to embrace militant Communism when launched on to the world market for wholesale capital. There is no reason to suppose the resultant Black governments would unduly differentiate between help proffered, say, by Germany (and this country will be a major contributor in the near future), ourselves, America or Russia. In fact there is every reason to believe that Black Governments who received sacrificial help at their birth from this country would remain very favourable to us as badly needed overseas customers in the future. This in turn would evaporate most of the veiled hostility that exists between the Black and White populations in Africa, caused mainly by the undue consideration of the White point of view. There is no doubt that our own standard of living was elevated to its present position because of our achievements in Africa, and the present African standard owes practically everything to these achievements too. But we know who has come off best. Now is the time to realise that from henceforth our paths are separate, although they need not be too different. The African must choose his path, and if we are fair, he should profit from our pioneering and our mistakes and should start out with a social organisation which embraces all our good points and none of our bad ones. If this highly desirable atmosphere is brought about in Africa (and it is possible) it will have far-reaching effects on the South African problem. It would help to lessen the distrust on both sides in the Union: by example the White Union would have evidence of Black integrity; by "freeing" Central and South Central Africa many of the Black participants in the present Union

struggle would turn North for emancipation and not try and oust a complete White nation. By so doing too, they could take their labour elsewhere and withdraw from the exploitation at present carried on. There is no doubt that to become a victim to this mass exploitation is the only choice open to many of the Africans in order to live. A lot of the White distrust exists because they fear the cultural (by Western standards) backwardness of the Blacks. I think that this is a very real problem but it is an insufficient reason for following a policy of strangulating "gradualism"; our neglect of the past must not be carried into the future. Very strong political, cultural, economical and strategical reasons can be advanced for the retention of a White State in the Union and they should not be ignored by invoking the "Brotherhood of Man" ideal. The secular deficiencies in trying to operate this ideal must receive recognition. However this paradoxical problem is not insoluble. The answer lies in our own hands. We can allay the fear and hostility of the Black by "playing down" our own claims in all our territories and giving as much economic, as well as political, freedom as possible. In addition we can directly influence the South African struggle by "snubbing" the White Union's ambitions for Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland, and follow a very rigorous pro-Black policy in these territories. It is encouraging to see that Belgium is prepared to follow such a policy in the Congo. We should assist her. This may sound like luring the African away from his legitimate claims on the Union, but if this example could be set for South Africa, the minimum of "luring" would be necessary because the Whites would quickly concede to many of the Blacks' claims, even if only through the scarcity of labour! In spite of the Prime Minister's words in South Africa recently, the Whites must feel fairly secure in this over-rigorous policy of "Apartheid" of theirs because nothing they see in our part of Africa is vastly to the contrary. This inconsistency of ours brings me to the third and last aspect of this problem.

It is not surprising to find that the most ardent and enthusiastic supporters of the Boycott and anti-Apartheid campaigns are political Socialists. The reason why I opposed the recent adoption at the Student's Council of these campaigns was because I now think "solidification" of thought round any religious or political creed should be minimised while up at University. Such a process can be crippling in an educational milieu. For this reason Ordinance XVI should be over and not under-protected.

This does not mean to say that I do not believe in socialism. I find in this country, however, that there is a world of difference from believing in socialism and being a political Socialist—at least for the vast majority. I sincerely believe that the under-estimation of this difference has contributed, in no small measure, to the failure of the Socialist Party in the last elections. The present Tory Party are successfully undermining all that the Socialist Party (Labour Party if you wish) represents to the average working man. The fact that the "ideal" of socialism is not embraced by countless millions is amply portrayed by the attitude shown to the large number of coloured people in our various town. I am very familiar with the Osmaston Road area of Derby with its immigrant West

Indian population. The wholesale evacuation of the white population at their introduction has produced almost the very opposite of integration. No doubt Nottingham and London are the same. Peculiar as it may seem a vast majority of those who have moved from the coloured people would call themselves Socialists! ! I have nothing but the highest admiration for the Socialists in our midst and no one can doubt their sincerity—all I ask is that they take note of this very real paradox. At least they try to practise what they preach as does Father Trevor Huddleston, but it is a safe bet that the vast majority of that ascetic's audience pay but poor lip-service to most of his utterances. Safely "entombed" behind their chintz curtains they wreath their sweet faces with smiles at the mere mention of "a coloured man."

Could anyone say, too, that the African people here at our own University are as integrated as they might be? I am a little doubtful. The absence of Africans on the Council is very notable. Why can't an African student be elected to look after their interests. They must have some which can only be appreciated by an African. I shall not say any more on this subject except that this deserves further consideration.

In conclusion, I would like to observe that the one regrettable feature of our University is the breeding of "disillusionment." Not that I think this will cause irreparable damage, for "Varsity ideals seem to be expendable and the transition from Halo to Bowler Hat will, no doubt, have its compensations.

JOHN DAWSON.

IL MIO MISTERO

RAGE, my heart, while yet my eyes are weeping,
Storm, my soul, while my mind still is sleeping,
Bind mind and soul into one insane endeavour
And die a martyr for a broken cause
If martyrs are so clever
So clever
So clever as to find a cause in all the earth's deceiving.

Fury is my name, yet both my eyes are weeping,
Turbulent my soul, though my limbs now are sleeping;
Lament, you ugly, misbegotten offspring of the earth
That think a martyred man can ever be
So cunning or so clever
So clever
As by his death to take the world and in the darkness bind it.

Bind it with a spirit that will always intertwine it,
Purging, tempering, comforting—oh if I could find it!
Find the source to put an end to my bereft soul's new bereaving,
But never, no, not ever,
Never,
Will it come to me for I am selfish and deceiving.

T. J. TURNER.

THE SEA

[N the greyness he will know himself—
The rhythm of the sea
Will not disturb,
because he and the sea are one.
The grey world knows itself.

First the wave seethes
As it surges forward,
Then rushes cold and wet,
grey-green turning white and black
in a cataract.
Toppling.
A crash that fades along the beach
And a murmur that retreats
to meet the endless waves.
The unchangingly, unmonotonous
Waves.

The air is not distinct,
mingling with the sea
in a wild chaotic harmony
of sound and motion.

The sea-grey sea,
Cloud-grey sky
And the land is dark cliffs colourless,
Neither black nor brown
Touched with the sea-sky mood.

There is nothing
for Man to know
and know himself
But the cold-grey sea
A world without distraction.

M. J. CARMEL.

PEOPLE IN THE PARK

THE man with the white stick,
And the eyes that you don't want to
Look at,
Don't want to see, in case he sees
You looking, as if he could.
But he has the boy
Who, at times unwilling, leads him.
The two sit in the sun,
Only one aware of its glare
Yet both feeling its heat.
The boy leans on the man
As if seeking the support of one
Better-armed than he.

In the March chill wind and the Sunday polished sun,
He with the cap
Cooed and mewed to the pigeons,
Coaxing them near
To his chair-ridden daughter.
She, paralysed with the mind
Of a small child. And he
Tunes his mind to the same pitch
To comfort and humour her.
But the pigeons wouldn't come
Insanity frightened them too.

No more the rushed breakfast
Nor the late supper, the sweating shirt,
The aching back.
Seven times Sunday now. All the
Time in the World, and with the gold-
Watch to mark the passing of every minute.
Time for a new routine;
When its dreary wet hide among the
Death-rustling news sheets in the
Public Reading Room
When it's dry come and sit on this bench
With old men in a green and pleasant
Place.

MIKE MILLER.

IS LITERARY CRITICISM POSSIBLE?

A NINETEENTH CENTURY English poet, in a moment of pique, described literary critics as "lice in the locks of literature." A present-day English poet, having spoken of all critics as "barking dogs," distinguished two species: "those who merely relieve themselves against the flower of beauty, and those, less continent, who afterwards scratch it up." The author of the first comment was Tennyson. The author of the canine conceit is William Empson, who, we may note, apart from being a poet is also a critic of considerable repute and a Professor of English Literature. Perhaps statements such as these are typical of the liberties of thought and speech which creative writers, whether greatly talented or not, will always allow themselves at the expense of the critic. In their eyes he must always seem a dull fellow, probably a failed or frustrated creative writer. If he is a university-trained critic he may even be regarded as a positive danger to imaginative writing—one of those "academic termites" who, according to Henry Miller, "hollow their way through books until there is nothing left but the shreds of literature and the husks of what once were men."

No doubt all this is harmless verbal exuberance. No doubt, too, much published literary criticism is pedestrian, if not positively unhelpful. And no doubt those who practise criticism within the university are all too conscious of that omnipresent sub-criticism which results from "reading books which nobody else has read in order to write books which nobody else will read." An American critic, George Steiner, went so far in a recent issue of *The Kenyon Review* as to begin his article with the arresting sentence: "In the twentieth century it is not easy for an honest man to be a literary critic." Steiner continued by saying that in the present state of the world there are many more urgent tasks than the writing of criticism. And he added that, in any case, the critic brings works of literature to the attention of those who least need his help since only those who are already highly literate read criticism.

Whatever the justification of this line of argument—the view that criticism is superfluous in addition to being anti-creative—we may take it as obvious that the criticism of literature is one of the least perfect of intellectual pursuits. It represents a field of human inquiry where points of view are constantly changing, where earlier judgments are continually being altered or rejected, where genuine agreement hardly exists concerning the frontiers between worthlessness and intrinsic merit or between failure, talent and genius. In this connection we need only observe the complex motives of outrage, fear of being "taken in," snobbery, genuine puzzlement, or a rare understanding which dictate the contradictory judgments passed, even by professional critics, on the novels and plays of Beckett or the painting of Picasso. Within a longer historical context we might contrast current evaluations of Donne or Maurice Scève with those accepted a hundred years ago.

The points I have so far made can all too easily be exploited in such a way as to encourage the rash conclusion that criticism must be futile because much of it is bad or uncertain. Apart from the instinct for self-preservation which a professional "teacher of literature" must feel in

such circumstances, I think that such a conclusion would be quite unsound and cannot properly be deduced from the first three paragraphs. In fact, there are embedded in these paragraphs two sets of distinctions which must be clearly recognized. The first is that to say much criticism is bad or confused is not the same as saying that all criticism is useless. The second is that because much criticism is bad it does not necessarily follow that it must inevitably be so. Two questions must therefore be considered: (1) in what way can literary criticism be, at least in theory, a useful or important activity? (2) can literary criticism achieve, in practice, the standard of excellence which we presuppose if we count it an important occupation?

Theoretically, literary criticism should have at least a twofold value. In the first place it should bring into play both our intellectual faculties and our imagination. A full response to poetry or prose, if it is set out in a carefully ordered form of words, will be the result of reason and imagination working in close conjunction and throwing increased light upon each other because of their intimate co-operation. To fuse analysis and imagination in this way is surely a desirable activity. And literary criticism, when directed towards great works of literature, would seem to add an extra dimension to analysis and imagination by feeding them on what I. A. Richards has called "the most important judgments we possess as to the values of experience." But criticism might prove valuable from a quite different point of view. When it is intelligent, imaginative and uncompromising in its standards it should serve the cause of the best creative writing. By pointing to what is excellent and showing, without humbug, why it is excellent, criticism might help decisively to form taste, sharpen judgment and make more widely acceptable what is good, yet perhaps disconcerting or disturbing, in contemporary literature. In this way it would no doubt perform an important function in helping to create the conditions in which the young and truly original, as well as older and more established writers, continue to produce their work and to find a lively, responsive audience.

All this may be true, but the fact is that it remains rather hypothetical and abstract. It even puts the cart before the horse in so far as it discusses the value of criticism before having attempted to show that satisfactory criticism really is possible. If genuine literary criticism is a practical possibility, then I am disposed to think it valuable in the ways I have suggested—and in other ways as well. But is genuine literary criticism possible? This is my second main question and no doubt it is fundamental to the whole discussion.

Nearly forty years ago Percy Lubbock pointed to the basic problem facing criticism of the novel. The famous opening paragraph of *The Craft of Fiction* begins as follows:

To grasp the shadowy and fantasmal form of a book, to hold it fast, to turn it over and survey it at leisure—that is the effort of a critic of books, and it is perpetually defeated. Nothing, no power, will keep a book steady and motionless before us, so that we may have time to examine its shape and design. As quickly as we read, it melts and shifts in the memory; even at the moment when the

last page is turned, a great part of the book, its finer detail, is already vague and doubtful . . . The experience of reading it has left something behind, and these relics we call by the book's name; but how can they be considered to give us the material for judging and appraising the book?

Lubbock adds: "It is scarcely to be wondered at if criticism is not very precise, not very exact in the use of its terms, when it has to work at such a disadvantage."

Really satisfactory criticism of fiction seems almost impossible, then, because of the difficulty of grasping a novel as a whole, experiencing it as a whole, retaining it whole in the mind in order to express a critical reaction to it. Perhaps this is a peculiar problem of fiction, however, and less pressing in the case of poetry. Certainly it would seem that a short lyrical poem can be experienced and retained in its wholeness to an extent which is impossible where a long novel is concerned. But with the short lyric an even more perplexing, though related, problem arises. What is the poem which we claim to criticize? Where does it exist—on the printed page; in the author's mind; in the reader's sensibility? These are questions concerning what it is fashionable in some circles to call the "ontological *situs*" of the poem, and if they cannot receive a satisfactory answer the criticism of poetry is clearly involved in some quite alarming difficulties.

Perhaps the simplest view of the matter is the one which claims that the poem is what we see on the page. The typographical arrangement of the poem and its grouping into stanzas may offer some evidence that the poet himself thinks of it in this way. Taking this idea a step further, poets like Apollinaire and E. E. Cummings have employed graphic devices or arranged the lines of their poems so that the subject is clear in the form as well as from the sense of the words—e.g., the words of a poem about a cigar are themselves arranged on the page in the shape of a cigar. In the criticism of such poetry attention must clearly be paid to the shapes we see on the page as well as to what we understand or experience from reading the page. But equally clearly such poetry, which may aim to coincide as closely as possible with its own physical appearance, is unusual. It is no more authentic poetry than the sonnets of Ronsard or the odes of Keates. Indeed, if the printed page were destroyed the poem would not be destroyed in the same sense so long as certain readers could recite it from memory. And there is the additional, though perhaps minor, point that if the poem is identified with the printed phenomenon on the page then each different type-setting will be, if not a different poem, at least a modification of the first poem printed. In the end one is bound to say, I think, that while the printed page *records* the poem it cannot *be* the poem. The poem exists elsewhere, and criticism, must look elsewhere if it is going to come to grips with the poem proper.

But where? It is sometimes suggested that the printed page records the poem in the sense that it puts in writing what must subsequently be read aloud. That is to say, the poem is identified with a *viva voce* reading of the printed words. But all poetry is not read aloud and we must surely be right not to question its existence simply because we read it

"to ourselves" or "in our minds." Furthermore, reading aloud adds to the poem a series of effects varying with each individual—pronunciation, distribution of stress, speed, the pitch of the reader's voice, and so on. As a result, on this theory there would once again be almost as many poems or variations as there were readers.

Poetry, it will be said, is most often read in silence. It is savoured and responded to in such a way that what we should call the poem must be something co-terminous with the reader's experience of the printed page. There is clearly some point in this argument. It is obvious that in order to make any contact with a poem, wherever it may be situated, individual experience of it must in some way take place. But two objections to the view that poetry is identical with reader-experience are not easily overcome. First, if poetry is equivalent to a mental and emotional experience on the reader's part, then when the reader is not experiencing the poem it has no existence. Second, if the poem is one with the reader's experience, then it will be shaped by the reader's particular mood when he reads, by his aesthetic responses, his intellectual capacity, his moral or religious convictions, and so on. Here once again we shall have, for example, almost as many versions of *In Memoriam* as there are readers. The result will be critical chaos.

The attempt has been made to give the poem an apparent stability and freedom from the anarchy of conflicting, subjective judgments by identifying it with the poet's own experience or intention. One can see the point of this at the stage when the poem is still unwritten and exists only in the author's mind. But most poets have readily admitted that once they attempt to give the poem verbal existence, once they write it down, a distressingly wide gap appears between intention and performance. The sonnet printed on the page is often a most inadequate account of the poet's experience and his purpose as a poet. Once again the question is bound to be asked: where is the real poem situated in these circumstances?

It seems clear that despite the various theories just mentioned the whereabouts of the poem or novel remains a matter for argument and debate. While this is so the objects and methods of literary criticism— and thus even the very possibility of criticism as a meaningful activity— must also be open to doubt. Perhaps William Faulkner was not so far from the truth when he said that "somewhere between the experience and the blank page the work shapes itself." At this point I must leave it to my readers to relate this theory to those previously mentioned, to scrutinize it in its own right, and to discuss whether or not it lessens in any way the seeming impossibility for criticism to pin down its own subject of study. Only when such problems are fully examined can we know whether we should go on to talk of criticism as a useful or important—or even sensible—occupation.

J.C.

THE whole problem of nuclear disarmament has too easily been debased into a battle between prejudice and emotion. Not that either of these is necessarily evil, but when you are faced with a problem that is of great importance, and provokes deep disagreement, they are useless, and perhaps dangerous. Let us try to drop them both for a few minutes and consider the situation rationally. Doing so we will at once notice that there are really two questions for discussion closely connected, but none the less distinct, which, for the sake of convenience, we may separate as far as possible. One asks whether the use or possession of nuclear weapons is morally permissible, the other, whether it is in any case worthwhile.

It is not only those who consider all war immoral, nor only those who judge morality by what is pleasant or unpleasant, who think that nuclear weapons cannot be used except immorally. For in every type of morality, killing and making war have been forbidden except under strict conditions. And among those conditions there has almost always been one, an important one, that people not involved in the struggle or quarrel which caused it, should not be harmed; one that meant only soldiers or rulers could legitimately be killed or victimised, but now, with the changes in the ways of war in the last century, the matter is not so simple, for a man who makes a bomb surely is as intimately involved and has taken sides as clearly as another man who drops it. To bomb factories thus becomes legitimate, and so we move on to justify the bombing of mines, and railways, and administrative centres. But this would still not allow us to destroy homes, schools, churches, hospitals and other places where there are almost certainly large numbers of people, all quite innocent of the war.

During the last war British bombers were sent out to destroy, deliberately, whole German cities. That was wrong, though understandable in the stress of warfare. Yet at least those bombs could have been aimed at strategic targets and used so as to avoid areas of little military importance. Nuclear weapons on the other hand are designed especially for the destruction of cities, the innocent and the guilty together. They cannot be anything but indiscriminate. The Americans' "smaller strategic weapons" are, according to official statements, as powerful as those exploded over Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and missiles arriving two miles off-target are described as "well within the area of total destruction." That sort of weapon cannot be intended just to destroy a railway junction.

But if it would be wrong to use those weapons in war, it is just as wrong to stock them in peace. Talk about a "deterrent" might be convincing (though I doubt it), in military terms, but is morally of no significance. To continue stockpiling weapons is to acknowledge the possibility of war, and it implies a readiness to use them. Even if it were meant as a huge and nonsensical bluffing game, any side which, in a future war, felt itself to be losing, would certainly use the worst weapon at its disposal. Yet the blame would hardly

rest with them, as in war all attention is focussed on winning at almost any price, and there is little time to consider the right and the wrong. So the burden of guilt or credit must rest with those who prepare for war.

Perhaps the most obvious condition for a just war is that the evils of defeat should outweigh, or at least be comparable with, the evils of war. Otherwise there can be no reason for starting or continuing to fight. The evils of nuclear war must by now be fairly well known, though it takes much effort to realise what is being said when hundreds of millions of lives are gleefully bandied about. On the other side, might there not be a fate worse than death, worse even than the possible extinction of mankind?

The people who think there might be, are generally those who feel that they have ideals which they should be prepared to defend with their lives: ideals of Christianity, love and freedom. But what, we may ask, becomes of those ideals when those who hold them are dead, and the rest of mankind, scrambling for life, is reduced to barbarism? And worse, what happens to those ideals when they are abandoned by those who profess them in the use of terrible weapons, which cannot even save the "Christian" west? To defend Christianity by un-Christian methods is an absurdity, but mere retaliation, with no hope of defence is an idea which should hardly occur to a Christian mind.

And what of the evils of defeat? The worst ever mentioned is oppression by a foreign power, probably Russia. Could that destroy Christianity, love and the spirit of freedom? If that is the Communists' object, they have hardly succeeded in the satellites, almost all of which have a common boundary with Russia. But between Britain and Russia there are several countries each as independent minded as the Poles, and each needing an enormous garrison of soldiers who could, like the Russians stationed in Hungary before 1956, be turned into allies. How long would it take us to convert Russia, if she defeated us in war? (That is, assuming that we are right: "for if this counsel be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.") My point is, that where there is life, there is hope, for all ideals, whether Christ's or Lenin's, and the truth may prevail in the end. But in nuclear war there is no hope, no ideal and no victory.

The deterrent "argument" is not so much an argument as a series of catch phrases, and it is really historical, political and psychological nonsense to imagine that deterrents have had or will have the required effect. For most wars have always been brought about by fear, begetting a desire to be first in the field, or to seize a moment when the aggressor has a temporary military superiority. And the deterrent attempts to rely on fear to prevent war! To threaten a people with destruction might be effective for five or ten or twenty years, but not for ever. Sooner or later, when world tension is rising, someone's nerve, perhaps their reason even, will break. They will think that if they strike first they may save a few wretched lives on

their own side. Common sense should tell us that this fear-ridden peace cannot go on for ever.

This is what the deterrent means.

We have already considered the worst possible effects of relinquishing it, and they are no worse. Nor are they by any means certain. There are many people in every country, including the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. who are looking for a way out of the present impasse. The effect of one country which has shown its ability to produce nuclear weapons, abandoning them and announcing that it does not wish to assist in the slaughter of mankind, might be decisive. It would help to break through the barrier of mistrust between the great powers, and set in motion processes which could eventually lead to total disarmament.

So it seems, that whichever way we look at the problem, selfishly or altruistically, from the political or the moral point of view, it is obviously foolish to continue to make nuclear weapons. But it seems that no-one has the courage to stop doing this, or else that we are all so deluded by our conventional "realism" that we fail to see the great issue of peace or destruction among the details of petty quarrels between governments. Self-styled "realists" have often prevented all kinds of disarmament proposals by presupposing their rejection or by creating bogey-men images of foreigners to silence discussion. Such realists are those who think that we ought to go on for ever making the same mistakes as were made in the past. But now we cannot afford to make those mistakes. Deterrents lead to war, fear and mistrust, quibbling, cowardice, and perpetual excuses all lead to war. To save the world some powerful nation must have enough courage to renounce its so-called rights to use these immoral weapons, without any certainty but with hope, that others will follow. There is one thing that is quite sure—we cannot make our situation, or that of the world, any worse by such action. If we do nothing the odds are against mankind surviving until 2000 A.D. We have the choice, let us choose *rightly*.

M. J. CARMEL.

THOUGHTS ON UNIVERSITY PROBLEMS II

(In the last issue of "Second Wessex," P. V. Hills wrote on some of the problems facing modern Universities. This second article is an attempt to express some of the causes of the dearth in cultural, ethical and political thought in the modern University).

MUCH has been said and written in recent months about the way Universities in this country are developing and their possible role in the society of the future. The majority of comment has been devoted to the University as a source of trained minds, equipped to tackle particular problems of an advanced society. An attitude which lays such great stress on the technical function of Universities is to some extent understandable, for as society becomes more complex, and as the proportion of University students maintained by public funds increases there will be a greater public demand for specialisation in graduate training and a lessened emphasis on learning for its own sake.

This specialisation is perhaps the major handicap to the function of a University as a source of new ideas and training in the social and cultural fields.

A second cause is that created by the lack of any constructive leaderships from the top. It is generally accepted that any form of leadership is mirrored in varying degrees at all levels in society. Inspired leadership is reflected in inspired effort. A negative or uninspired lead similarly percolates downwards. Further, whenever the symbols of success are the size of the income earned or the number of *tangible* possessions owned, moral and cultural pursuits will be neglected. The deliberate, and to a large extent successful, attempt of the Conservative Party (particularly before the last election) to propagate the all importance of material well-being was in this sense unforgivable.

Pre-university education is another key reason for the decline in cultural interest. The obsession over the number of "A" levels gained by their pupils has led many teachers to overlook the fact that a major function of the school is to provide pupils with the necessary training to enable them to take part in activities and interests other than those connected with the prescribed course of study. There is no evidence to support the view, however, that this weakness comes mainly as a result of the greater intake by Universities of Grammar School pupils. If this were so we would expect the proportion of students coming from Public Schools to stand out above their Grammar School colleagues. Any member of this University will know that this is not the case.

Under-staffing in Universities which cuts down the possibility of individual tuition and seminar work also creates problems. Where University training is to be limited to a few lectures each term, it will be evident that the spare time of the student will be limited. Much student effort is wasted or misdirected through inadequate supervision. Furthermore, it must be extremely difficult for tutors to find

time in their overcrowded programme to partake in and encourage interests outside their particular responsibility. It is common to hear complaints about overcrowded schools and the wide student-teacher ratio; perhaps similar problems which exist in Universities could be given comparable attention.

A further factor which may influence free, open thought and expression—by members of University staffs in particular—is the desire by the Universities to attract financial assistance for research purposes from industry and private organisations. Numerous firms and institutes make contributions to University funds irrespective of the opinions and ideas coming from the Universities. There are no doubt others, however, who would not be so willing to contribute if these views did not conform to certain "requirements." Perhaps it is understandable that "people who pay the piper should wish to call the tune," but it is nonetheless a barrier to free expression and action. As more money comes from exchequer grants, however, and the reliance on industry diminishes in importance, such problems may disappear.

Even without the obstacles mentioned, there are many students who do not make any attempt to improve their understanding of culture or social and political affairs or, indeed, make any effort to find out what their fellow students are doing. There are, on the one hand, those students who look on the University merely as a means of obtaining a passport (degree) to a well-paid job, and assume that society owes them a living for their "sacrifice" of three or more years at University. On this kind of attitude, the many advantages which exist to the University student are lost. Secondly, there are those who in the words of a previous editor of this magazine, "suffer an invented snob complex, which is embarrassed by anything cultural or ethical." School training is probably much at fault here, though as this group usually comprises those who devote much energy and time to functions such as Rag there is more hope: hope that is of the energy devoted to Rag, etc., could be diverted to more constructive pursuits. One thing that these people have proved is that they can find the time and are prepared to take part in extra-curricular activities. It is merely a matter of better application.

Perhaps if there were changes in the organisation of the University course it would help to redress the balance between the technical function of Universities and their wider purpose. For example, if the examinations during the second of a three year course were dispensed with, the student may have more time and feel more inclined to take part in activities outside his own subject. The notions that the student needs frequent "tests" to keep him at his work, and that regular exams provide the tutor with some guide to the success of his lecturing are somewhat difficult to understand. For his part, the student is only *really* concerned about the final exam; and after the first year exams which are, of course, necessary to determine whether or not the student is capable of benefiting from

further training, additional exams are irritating time-consumers. On the other hand, no lecturer can really believe that a student can properly digest his lectures and do justice to the reading list in the short space of time between commencement of term and the examinations.

The possibility that students released from exams may not make the best use of their time could be avoided by fairly frequent tutorial interviews.

It is, of course, possible to argue that the present state of the Universities is good, that Universities should be more functional and reflect more accurately standards and conditions that exist outside than they did in the past. And if society does not appear to be concerned with cultural and ethical problems and interests why should Universities? In answer to this, one can only repeat a view which has been expressed a great many times and has a good deal of truth in it. This is that the University years provide almost the only period in life when one is reasonably free to be non-conformist, when one has facilities at hand (albeit limited) to indulge in pursuits which do not exist outside. In pre-University years it is extremely difficult to be non-conformist because of the numerous restrictions imposed by family and school, and the inhibitions created by too familiar surroundings. After graduation, the lack of time and the need to conform to the standards and policy of the industry, business or profession, set the obstacles to open, frank expression.

This licence which exists to University students is, as the article has attempted to point out, not unrestricted. But after allowing for all handicaps, the University student is in a much freer position than most other groups in society. One can only hope that it will not be too long before a more liberal flow of new, and even controversial ideas, based on a renewed interest in socio-political and cultural affairs becomes apparent.

DERRICK M. HOLMES.

HOUSE OF CARDS

It is a law as old as nature
That those that have want more.
It explains much good and greater evil
For man seems better equipped for evil
And hence there is more to explain.

Look into yourself
And listen to the echoing voices
That reverberate from granite wall
To granite floor
And die away in the sludge,
Only to reappear
As though they had been suspended
In the timeless void
And then to die again.

Listen to them, and take heed
For when, for you, time is no more
When the granite has crumbled
The sludge drained away,
You will hear them clearly
Then more clear
Then louder
Louder
Louder
Trying in one last desperate effort
To redeem you : but too late.

Listen now for the love of God;
Listen now, for the love of man;
Listen now, or be damned.

I don't hear your voices;
All I hear is the laughter of lewd women,
Laughing at lewder jokes,
The brief hiss of the soda syphon,
The flare of matches, and the racing on the tele;
And the gossip, whispered, hand to ear,
Malicious and amusing.

No, I don't hear your voices,
Go tell your funny stories to some religious crank.
Your life is but a house of cards
Built solely for amusement
And as the joy wanes
So will the cards crumble.
So empty are they
There will be no wreckage to construct anew

Nothing to extricate and say
At least I have this.
Nothing.
A timeless, meaningless void
With no past and no future
To recognise the present.
Bended knee and drooping head
Will not avail you,
Nor your piteous bloodshot eyes
Nor your anguished wail,
For you have been told
Which knowledge magnifies your crime
One hundredfold.
Fellow creature, you are Damned.

IAN GALLON.

THEOPHANY

We met by chance, your eyes and mine, and yet
it was not strange; the wise can tell their fate.
Oval doors opened wide as if by sign,
revealing deep inside a soul like mine.
Our souls at once embraced, became one will,
mute, naked but encased. The World was still.
Entwined, though space denied eternity,
we stood. All Earth defied for liberty.

Away, beyond this plane we spoke, and made
a Bower, wherein we passed an immortal hour.

Then Time, sparing no second more, reined abrupt.
Mortality beckoned—arched finger
passive, corrupt. "Linger" I plead, as, like
the soft caress of summer's rain,
you pass. Now alone through a vacant Fall
I walk, in vain, gaunt lines will etch my loss.
I shall never, on Earth your eyes reclaim
Only when tall shadows mantle my frame.

JOHN J. DAWSON.

ONE wonders how subjectivist art, in the sense that life is regarded as the vain pursuit of an ideal, can ever be reconciled with the sufferings manifest in the world today because of political oppression, or racial and social inequality. One feels a reconciliation can be made only if the artist is himself a manifestation of this oppression or inequality, that his voice speaks for a million others, his sorrow and his hopelessness a representation of theirs. If his alone, their cause must go unchampioned. Subjectivist art, in this context, is essentially concerned with the rebellion of the individual, it is his expression in art; when alliance is made with others, with groups or popular movements, the expression becomes political or social, it is no longer artistic.

So much of subjectivist art is concerned with the alienation of the individual, the loneliness of extreme sensitivity, the sadness of an intangible difference, emotion in endless conflict with reason, utter futility with purpose, and the inability ever to compromise. One could dismiss this alienation as self-inflicted. The alienation of those subjected to the tragedies of poverty and ignorance can never be so dismissed: They are the result of circumstance and the pitiless passage of time, they are suffering physical pain and positive alienation.

"Subjectivist art has always tried to prove that life is 'but an instant,' 'but a dream,' and that it is senseless to strive to improve it, to waste energy on the struggle for a better future for one's homeland, for mankind." This criticism was made by the magazine "Pravda" of Pasternak's poem "The Wedding," which depicts life as a momentary revelation and the subsequent vain pursuit of a dream. It is significant that in a society in which supreme economic and political power runs parallel with utmost suppression, condemnation should be made of one example of subjectivist art which is not that of egoism, but art reconciled with that of which it is a part. Here, it is not merely the inevitability of non-conformity, it is the cry of the many echoing into history. Subjectivist art is egoistic when it depicts only the questioning of the artist himself, when the society of which he is a product acts merely as the reflection of his own sufferings. It can never be anything else when it seeks only to personify those aspects of life which have become unbearable to the artist, when this represents an inability to see beyond himself. It is egoism because the artist condemns, or despises, or regrets, that which he knows he alone can never be.

Where the freedom of great numbers of people within any social order is curtailed because a political policy results in either physical or emotional starvation, where those groups maintain the economic superiority of a country are forced to conform to a way of life which they can neither enjoy nor reject, one feels that subjectivist art which is not created for them can never be reconciled with them, however great its awareness. Art that is a state of mind of the individual can never be reconciled with total reality.

C. WATKINS.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

BEFORE the Homicide Act of 1957 there was only one penalty for murder, and that was death. The Act made several important changes in the law, of which the most important for the purposes of this discussion were the introduction of the defence of diminished responsibility, the widening of the defence of provocation and the removal of the death penalty for all murders except those in the course or furtherance of theft, by shooting or explosion, in resisting arrest, of a police officer acting in the course of his duty, of a prison officer by a prisoner, and for repeated murders. This obviously removes many of the things to which people used to object to in the old Common Law, but the question it is now necessary to discuss is whether the present situation is satisfactory: for this to be shown it must still be proved that capital punishment is more of a deterrent than any other punishment, or alternatively that it is otherwise desirable, and in addition to either of these that mistakes either do not occur at all or that they occur so infrequently that they may be safely ignored.

That capital punishment is the "supreme deterrent" has been argued by many people, including many, such as the judges, whose views are entitled to respect; but views are not evidence, and it is clear that so many opinions, notably those of the judges, have been wrong in the past, that it is necessary to treat their present views with caution. Now it is obvious that capital punishment is no deterrent to the insane, or to those who kill in the heat of passion or to those who are certain that they are not going to be caught. It is also obvious that it will deter some people from carrying guns on burglary expeditions, for example, and may for that reason prevent some murders that would otherwise have taken place. The problem, therefore, is not whether capital punishment is a deterrent, but whether it is an effective one.

This can only be proved by evidence, and apart from the opinions of judges and those who say that they themselves have been deterred, neither of which are very satisfactory because it is impossible to verify them, this can only be obtained from foreign countries.

At present in Europe, among the democracies, only France and Great Britain retain the death penalty, and it has been abandoned for murder in Russia and many other countries outside Europe. In all abolitionist countries the murder rate, sometimes after an initial rise, has continued to decline much as it did beforehand.

Against this it has frequently been argued, that the experience of other countries is irrelevant because they are different people to us and are living under different conditions. In the nature of things it is obviously true that they are different from us, but it seems a little difficult to believe that of all the races under the sun it is the English almost alone that are so unutterably depraved that only the fear of death prevents wholesale murder. The most similar country to England is probably Scotland, and there the death penalty was in abeyance from 1929 to 1944, and there was no increase in the murder

rate compared with the previous fifteen years. It is possible to eliminate differences by comparing the rates of two similar states, of which only one uses capital punishment, such as Rhode Island and Massachusetts. There the differences are so slight as to be negligible. Better examples can be found among States, such as New Zealand, which have for one reason or another, reintroduced the death penalty, but even there it is hard to find any effect. In France the penalty was suspended for a time, during which the murder rate rose rapidly and there was such an outcry that it had to be re-imposed, which would appear to give one example to support the views of the judges; but even this is not very satisfactory, because during the time of the suspension the rate of non-capital homicide rose more than that of capital homicide. Although it is too early to say what effect the Homicide Act will have in England, it appears to be the same as in other countries: In the twelve months after the Act there were *three less murders than in the previous twelve months*.

Perhaps the most effective argument for deterrence is that it will deter people from carrying guns; but even this is not entirely satisfactory, because, as Donovan, K.C. (as he then was) pointed out in the 1948 debate in the House of Commons, the argument cuts both ways: if a man knows that he will be hanged for shooting it will be worth shooting again no matter how often to make good his escape. Here it is worth comparing the experiences of England, France, Belgium, Holland and Denmark since the war. The first point to note is that of these only France and England retain capital punishment. Secondly, whatever is the case in England, France and Belgium, it is at any rate known that large quantities of arms are in private hands in Holland and Denmark. Now if the arguments of the defenders of the death penalty were correct, we could confidently expect to find a greater use of arms in Belgium, Holland and Denmark than in England or France. Yet in fact, just the reverse is true; the rate is higher in England and France than in Denmark or Holland. Belgium also provides an interesting example in this respect, because although the use of firearms has risen there, if this was due to the absence of capital punishment it should have occurred fifty years ago.

Far from being an effective deterrent, it even appears that the death penalty has the opposite effect to that intended. Jung's view is that murderers being the type of people that they are, the death penalty is more likely to incite them to murder than to deter them. As it is clear that the views of other people have been wildly wrong in the past, it is only just that one should treat such a view with extreme caution. Although not common, one such case has been known in England, when a man committed an offence, apparently merely to be in Dartmoor at the same time as a man was due to be hanged, whom he referred to as a "hero"; shortly afterwards he himself committed an apparently motiveless murder. Professor Thorston Sellin, an American expert in criminology gave evidence before the Gowers Commission on Capital Punishment and said that although it is not common, imitative murder does occur and is recognised as such. It is also difficult to assess the value of capital

punishment in that it is seldom known what causes the murder in the first place. For example Haigh went to a lot of trouble in acquiring large quantities of acid and baths in order to get quite a small amount of money, which would surely have been easier to get by fraud. Another man murdered his parents in order to get a car to go to London. These are obviously extreme examples, but nevertheless the motives behind murders are seldom very strong.

Other reasons which have been put forward to support capital punishment are, that it is fair, or that "the wages of sin is death"; that life imprisonment is worse than death; that Society ought not to be obliged to keep murderers; or, Shaw's argument, that they ought to be killed like mad dogs.

The argument that it is "fair" was put forward by Lord Darlington a judge, to the Select Committee of the House of Commons, and seems very similar to that of Lord Maugham in the House of Lords that "the wages of sin is death": as an argument from religion this does not sound very convincing because it is surely meant in the sense of spiritual death in the way that St. Paul uses it; even the Jews sharply distinguished between sin and crime. The Ten Commandments were not law in the sense that we know it, but were moral precepts. The actual code of law is in the two chapters following. The argument that life imprisonment is worse than death hardly stands up to examination. Admittedly, according to Sir Winston Churchill, at the time he was Home Secretary, a reprieved man committed suicide at the prospect of life imprisonment, but on the other hand it is extremely rare that anyone who is condemned to death, does not try every possible chance, appealing to the Court of Criminal Appeal and to the Home Secretary.

Society is by no means obliged to keep murderers in the sense meant. There is no reason on earth why they should not work for their keep and even compensate the relatives of their victims; if they did this they would not only be of some benefit, even though the actual damage is irreparable, but they would also be able to hold themselves with more self respect when they finally emerged, if this were sometimes, as at present, considered possible.

Shaw's argument that murderers ought to be killed as a mad dog is: it is submitted impossible for a Society that even calls itself Christian, it is a doctrine of Nazism and there is no essential difference between killing murderers for such reasons, and for example, Jews.

On the other hand, the most important of the abolitionists' arguments, besides the one that capital punishment is ineffective and, therefore, unnecessary, is that one can never be sure that one has not made a mistake, and some cases in recent years give strong grounds for suspicion. Not all of them are to do with murder, but the same arguments apply to capital punishment as to imprisonment, even granted that the man will be reprieved if the Home Secretary has the smallest doubt of the man's guilt. Probably the most notorious case was that of Adolph Beck who after serving a seven years sentence for robbery was convicted of the same offence in 1904. Both of these were on the evidence of numerous witnesses and handwriting

experts; but it was later proved that both of the offences had been committed by a John Smith, who although he looked rather like Beck, was by no means identical. Oscar Slater was condemned to death but reprieved in 1909, and only in 1928 was he released when the verdict was set aside on the ground of misdirection to the jury. Another example is that of Rowland, who after serving a sentence for attempted murder, was later convicted of murdering a prostitute with whom he had been living. Subsequently another man made a statement admitting the killing, which was said to be extraordinarily well detailed for a pure invention; this statement was, of course, soon withdrawn, and Rowland was hanged for the murder; some years later the man who had made the statement killed another person in remarkably similar circumstances and immediately reported it to the police, saying that he often had urges to do that sort of thing and could not help it. Evans is another who is almost certainly not guilty of the offence charged, even according to Mr. Chuter Ede, the Home Secretary, and if the jury had known at the time the character of the chief witness for the prosecution he would never have been convicted of any murder.

Sometimes, although this has never yet happened in England, conclusive proof of a miscarriage of justice is found by the reappearance of the victim. Difficult though it is to prove a mistake when a man is in prison, how much more difficult it is to prove it, and how much less likely that anyone should try, once the convicted man is dead. Miscarriages of justice are hardly likely to occur once in a thousand times, but as someone once remarked, that is not much comfort for the one.

MATTHEW TYLOR.

abstract four quarter one
 chicken egg frog spawn
 moon of darkness sun of day
 making for the rhythm of eternity
 until all will fall unto the hands of time
 and no remains be left
 left to tell the doom of man
 and the destruction of his over production
 lest he heed the way of the rodent

for the world is space
 and space for only so many as it is
 even though they drag the sea depth
 and fertilise the desert
 it will not suffice
 for too great are the numbers

many will die
 even the little children
 and their moribund remains cover the earth
 from which humus shall feed those who survive
 to make aeons later the same mistake.

N.B.

AN APPROACH TO POETRY

T. S. ELIOT in his essay, "The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism," referring to the critic of poetry, and Johnson in particular, makes some very pertinent observations of critics. He points out that:

"Every generation must make its own appraisal of the poetry of the past, in the light of the performance of its contemporaries and immediate predecessors."

Following this he points out three critical extremes which, if indulged in to excess, will be valueless as accurate criticism. The first extreme is when a critic busies himself with a poem's implications—moral, social, religious or other—thus making the poem a text for discourse. The next extreme is found when a critic sticks too closely to the "poetry," and adopts no attitude to what the poet has to say, thus depriving it of significance. Lastly, there is a philosophic borderline which must not be transgressed too far, or too often, if the critic does not wish to abandon his standing as a critic and present himself as a philosopher, metaphysician, sociologist or psychologist instead.

Despite Mr. Eliot's cautioning, there is a particular branch of criticism which interests me; namely trying to find out exactly, or as nearly as possible, what the author of a poem intended to say. It embraces all of the points that should not be used excessively: implications, poetry and philosophy, and can be very interesting and valuable, both to the reader himself and to his appreciation of poetry.

There are two meanings of a work; the meaning of the work itself, and the meaning which the author intended to express in the work. Sometimes confusion is caused by a critic seeing the one and ignoring the other, thus resulting in critical absurdities. Johnson's view of Milton's "Lycidas" is a good example of this. Johnson felt that the pastoral form which Milton adopted for his elegy was inappropriate. It also led him to criticize pastoral imagery as misleading, when if he had stopped to think about the imagery of the shepherds, the gray-fly, and related them to the tradition of pastoral elegies he would have perhaps appreciated the poem a little more. The evidence for the meaning of the work is derived from a study of the work itself, the words in which it was written, and their syntax. Included in the meaning of words are their history, their associations and contemporary value. The ideal reader is, of course, fully aware of all these values and least influenced by his idiosyncratic interpretations. Thus if the Anglo-Saxon poetic language is encountered, the reader must remember that ordinary words like "sea" or "ship," were called many things, such as "swanrad"—"swan's road," "hwaetes epel"—"country of the whale," and "waegflota"—"wave floater," "waeghengestas"—"wave stallions." Nearer our own times one can consider the Augustan desire for poetic diction, or remember how confusing some of Shakespeare's word uses are. Thus it can be seen that with the passage of time, the meanings of words can change, and so perhaps the poem can shift its meaning. There are then, the meanings of a work at the time of its composition and its reading.

There is also a need for biographical study as well as historical, which will make the work fully intentional. The author must be admitted as a witness to the study of his work. His idiosyncrasies are more important than those of the reader, and are relevant to his design, if a true, accurate picture of his intentions is to be sought. It is quite interesting to compare Tennyson's two versions of the "Lady of Shalott," one written in 1832, and revised in 1842, the 1842 giving a more mature and poetically satisfying account. This comparison of the versions can be found in F. L. Lucas' selections from Tennyson. It is always helpful to try to find out what an author says about his poems. Keats' letters are extremely valuable in helping us appreciate his poetry, as are his introductions. It is often quite revealing to discover why a poet used a particular word or image. Matthew Arnold, writing to an acquaintance about the image of a cuckoo in "Thyrsis," said that he had heard it at Woodford in the Epping Forest. Wordsworth's aim to use the language of the common people in his poems is often taken for granted by the hasty and anti-Wordsworthian reader. One can remember the "Idiot Boy," and the ramblings found in "The Thorn," but if one stops and considers the use of the word "diurnal" in one of the "Lucy" poems, and then progresses carefully through a few poems noting what Wordsworth is writing and also what he is trying to do, then referring back to his preface to the "Lyrical Ballads," it might become more apparent that he is not so puerile as a first reading may have suggested.

However, to return to poetry in general, a work having been produced, must continue to exist independently of the author's intentions or thoughts about it. Evidence from which to judge an author's ideas can be obtained from three sources. Firstly, the intentional meaning revealed from biographical and external evidence, lies outside the meaning of words as far as normally determinable. Then there is internal evidence constituted by the words' actual meanings. Lastly there is a middle ground of information; certain words could have certain meanings for the author, or he could use certain words habitually. Biography is only a part of the whole history that makes up the study of the meaning of the word. J. L. Lowes' book "Road to Xanadu" is an excellent study based on these lines. To infer the author's intentions from internal evidence only presupposes that the meaning of the work itself and the meaning which the author intended to present are the same thing. But where there is no external evidence determination is impossible. Can we assume that an author would not publish his work if it did not mean what he said? A poem is a highly individual interpretation of ideas. Criticism of the same is also, or tends to be, highly individual. Judgment based on external evidence cannot be as specific and concrete a judgment as the study of the author's state of mind during the composition. The work from the state of mind and the avowed intention may be entirely different.

To sum up (briefly what I have been trying to say is as follows): It is difficult to distinguish between the external and the internal evidence of a poem, in determining what an author intends. It can

be said, to rely on certain types of evidence is to go in the direction of biography, and to rely on other types of evidence is to stay close to the actual meaning of the work itself. The meaning of the word lies within the work, and no judgment of intention is relevant unless corroborated by the work itself, in which case it is superogatory. It is misleading to speak of judging a work with respect to its success in carrying out the author's intention. The word "intention" is often confused with "whole actual meaning" in passing judgment, so that in some cases a judgment about a disparity of intentions and result, is really a judgment about the whole meaning and plan of the work as seen in the work itself. These are judgments of evaluation, and such judgments refer, not to the relation of means to ends, or of manner to matter, but the relation of part to whole.

To illustrate some of the points I have discussed above, I have chosen one poem—not a good poem in the sense that it could be found in any verse anthology—but a poem which is an original composition by one of my friends. The author wishes to remain anonymous for personal reasons, but allowed me to question certain statements in the poem, which were essential for my study.

THE FLIGHT OF THE BAY

He came, a fiery charger fleeing
Night, in haste and madness borne,
Galloping, galloping into light
From shades of night to peace of dawn.

Through the woods and o'er the rise,
Fleet of foot he still came on,
A snorting madness, flashing eyes
A fierce and fiery melting brown.

Forever flying, hasting, plunging
On and on o'er field and fence
In reckless pace, and ever lunging
Foaming, fleeing, fleeing thence.

As the night was chased away
By the pink and gaining dawn,
The fear of flight forsook the bay—
He slowed and faltered, stopped forlorn

And by an alien stream he pondered,
Sheltered by an alien tree,
And feeding on strange grass he wondered
What the fear of night could be.

The meaning of the poem itself is quite clear. It is a poetical picture of a horse in flight at early dawn. The language in which it is written suggests a slightly artificial air. To me it seems as if there is a strong Victorian influence presenting a picture which, if

drawn, would be of the same style as the Monarch of the Glen. But idiosyncratic views are to be avoided. No doubt many of the words have different meanings than the meanings I allot them. "Alien" suggests foreign; the phrase "fiery charger" is reminiscent of a huge medieval horse, decked in armour and trappings. The words have not changed their meaning very much since the poem was composed in May, 1959.

Biographical study revealed a startling amount of information which helped to give the poem a new significance. The author, talking about the poem and the time of composition, revealed that it was written just before finals, and was composed with the feeling that although a lot of work was being covered, he was getting absolutely nowhere. On stopping to consider the position, the author found that the thought of finals was not as bad as had at first been considered.

The author also revealed that "fiery charger" was a favourite term used for horses. Horses were also the author's great favourites. On suggesting that the poem was written with a strong influence of Victorianism, I discovered that, in fact, the author had read Tennyson's "In Memoriam."

Thus was established a link between the external and the internal meanings, a link which the title does not reveal. "The Flight of the Bay" suggested a word picture, but as can be seen, the author's pre-occupation with expressing thoughts about haste and unnecessary worry were beneath its surface. I have suggested a sub-title, "Finals," which would establish the link between the actual and symbolical meanings.

Thus it can be seen, to establish what the author was trying to do required a balance of historical, actual and biographical details. By seeking biographical evidence, it could be established that there was the link between the levels of meaning.

The wisdom of Mr. Eliot's advice, to be moderate in critical indulgences, has, I hope, been amply demonstrated. There never is, or never will be, any critic who is skilful enough to write an appreciation dependent on either the biography, the "poetry," or the philosophy of a particular poem. As I have said earlier, a poem is a highly individual interpretation of ideas; criticism is also a highly individual art. Thus dogmatism is to be tolerated from others, and avoided by the individual when passing judgment on, or criticising, literature and especially poetry.

My Acknowledgments are due to the "Dictionary of World Literary Terms," which provided me with useful and helpful ideas; also to the author of the poem for being so tolerant and amenable to questioning

NOTE ADDED BY THE AUTHOR OF THE POEM

The poem is written about one particular horse, and when I used "fiery charger," I obviously therefore had no visions of armour

and mediocrity. My "noble friend," Rusty, is a rich bronze colour, and is endowed with blonde mane and tail, and a beautiful white blaze. When he is charging around with his nostrils wide and ears back, he is, therefore, one great kaleidoscope of all the colours one associates with fieriness. Hence, I hope, the justification of the much maligned term, "fiery charger," and without any medieval associations. It just happens to be the picture which comes into my mind whenever I see him in such a mood. One other point—although the poem was written when it was, at that time I did not envisage any connection between what, to me, was purely a description of an imagined event albeit about a real horse, and Finals. However, having had such a possibility pointed out to me it was obvious that sub-consciously it was so. In any event, I am never aware of writing a poem anyway; so really it is just as much of a mystery to me, as to my critic.

THE AUTHOR.







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